

# Elder

*Sambucus nigra*



WOODLAND  
TRUST

## What to look for

Deciduous shrub

Brownish-grey, twisted trunk and branches

Leaves similar to Ash, with toothed leaflets opposite one another

Clusters of tiny white flowers with a musky scent

Drooping clusters of round, green berries ripen to black in autumn



## Where found

Very common in hedges, waste ground, woodland edges and scrub on fertile, moist soils throughout the UK

## When to look

Leaves from March

Flowers in June

Leaves drop in October/November

Ripe fruit in September/October



### Did you know?

Elderflower cordial and elderberry wine are popular uses of the flowers and fruit

The Romans used elderberry juice as a hair dye

Elderberry syrup makes an effective cold remedy

The word elder comes from the Anglo Saxon word aeld meaning "fire"

The hollow stems of the young branches were used for blowing air into a fire

The stems have also been used to make simple flutes, whistles and peashooters

Some people find elder flowers fragrant, others think the smell is unpleasant

The flowers are very popular with insects, and the berries are sought after by birds

The leaves are very pungent and make an effective insect repellent

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